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A

BRIEF and SERIOUS

WARNING

T O S U C H

As are concerned in *Commerce* and *Trading*,
who go under the Profession of TRUTH,
to keep within the Bounds thereof, in
Righteousness, Justice and Honesty to-
wards all Men.

✱✱✱ ANY Days and Months, yea, some
✱ M ✱ Years, hath my Life been oppressed,
✱✱✱ and my Spirit grieved, to see and hear
of the uneven Walking of many, who
have a Name to live, and profess the Knowledge
of God in Words; yea, and also of some who
have tasted of the good Word of God, and have
been made Partakers of the Power of the World
to come, and have received the heavenly Gift
and Grace of God, *which teacheth all* (who walk
in it) *to deny all Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts,*
and to live soberly, honestly and righteously in this
present World; whose Faithfulness (with great
Reason) hath been expected to God in Things
of the highest Concern, and to have walked as
Lights in the World, and in all Faithfulness both

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to GOD and Man, to have stood as living Monuments of the Mercies of the LORD, letting their Lights so shine before Men, that they might see their good Works, both in spiritual and temporal Concerns; and so might have honoured and glorified GOD in their Day and Generation, and have convinced (or confounded) Gain-sayers, putting to Silence the Ignorance of foolish Men, whereby the worthy Name of the LORD, (by which they have been called) might have been renowned through the Earth, and his precious Truth and Glory spread to the Ends of it, that many, thro' the beholding their good and exemplary Conversation in *Christ*, (coupled with the holy Fear of GOD) might have desired to lay hold of the Skirt of a *Christian* indeed, *whose Praise is not of Men, but of GOD.*

These are the Fruits which we have laboured and travelled for through many and great Tribulations, *that many might be turned to Righteousness, and that the Knowledge of the Power and Glory of the LORD might cover the Earth, even as the Waters do the Sea.* This was (and is) our only End and Design, which, blessed be the LORD, many are Witnesses of, and established in, to our abundant Joy and Comfort: But there are some amongst us who have not walked humbly with the LORD, as he hath required, nor kept in that low Estate neither inwardly nor outwardly, which becometh such who are travelling up to *Zion*, with their Faces thitherward, but have launched from that Rock, which is *firm and sure*, into the great Sea of *Troubles and Uncertainty*, where some have been drowned, others hardly escaping, and many yet labouring for the Shore, with little
Hopes

Hopes of coming at it; who have not only brought themselves in Danger of suffering Shipwreck, but have drawn in others, and have endangered them also, which hath opened the Mouths of the Enemies of *Sion's* Welfare, to blaspheme his great and glorious Name, and hath eclipsed the Lustre of the glorious Sun of Righteousness both in City and in Country: This is a crying Evil, and ought not to go unreprieved, and that with a severe Countenance, for God is angry with it, and will assuredly punish it.

Many have got Credit upon the Account of TRUTH, because at the Beginning it did, and doth still lead all who were and are faithful to it, to Faithfulness and Truth even in the unrighteous *Mammon*, and to let their Yea be Yea, and their Nay be Nay, even between Man and Man in outward Things; so that many would have credited one that was called a *Quaker* with much, and many I believe, did meerly upon that Account, some whereof, I doubt, have just Cause to repent of it already: But if Truth and Righteousness had been lived in by all who profess it, there had been no such Occasion given; for they who still retain their Integrity to the Truth and Life of Righteousness manifested, can live with a Cup of Water, and a Morfel of Bread in a Cottage, before they can hazard other Mens Estates to advance their own; such are not forward to borrow, nor to complain for Want, for their Eye and Trust is to the LORD their Preserver and Upholder, and he hath continued the little Meal in the Barrel, and the Oil in the Cruse hath not failed to such, 'till God hath sent further Help; this is certainly known to a Remnant at this Day, *who have*

coveted no Man's Silver, Gold or Apparel, but have and do labour with their Hands Night and Day, that the Gospel may be without Charge.

It is so far below the Nobility of *Christianity*, that it is short of common Civility and honest Society amongst Men, to twist into Mens Estates, and borrow upon the TRUTH's Credit, (gained by the just and upright Dealing of the Faithful) more than they certainly know their own Estates are like to answer; and with what they borrow reach after great Things in the World, appearing to Men to be what in the Sight of God and Truth they are not, seeking to compass great Gain to themselves, whereby to make themselves or Children rich or great in the World: This I testify for the LORD GOD is Deceit and Hypocrisy, and will be blasted with the Breath of his Mouth, and we have seen it blasted already.

And that Estate that is got either with the rending, or with the Hazard of rending another Man's, is neither honestly got, nor can be blessed in the Possession; for he that borrows Money of another, if the Money lent be either the Lender's proper Estate, or Part of it, he has Money that he is intrusted withal, and he is, or some such, who would not let it go upon certain good Security, and to have the whole Consideration of its Improvement; and the borrower, though he hath little or no real or personal Estate of his own, but hath got some Credit, either as he is a Professor of the TRUTH or otherwise, and hath (it may be) a little House, and a small Trade, it may be enough to a low and contented

tentented Mind; but then the Enemy gets in,
 and works in his Mind, and he begins to think
 of an higher Trade, and a finer House, and to
 live more at Ease and Pleasure in the World,
 and then contrives how he may borrow of this
 and the other, and when accomplished according
 to his Desire, then he begins to undertake great
 Things, and gets into a fine House, and gathers
 rich Furniture and Goods together, launching
 presently into the strong Torrent of a great Trade,
 and then makes a great Shew beyond what
 really he is, which is Dishonesty; and if he ac-
 complishes his intended Purpose, to raise himself
 in the World, it is with the Hazard (at least) of
 other Mens Ruin, which is unjust: But if he
 falls short of his Expectation, (as commonly such
 do) then he doth not only ruin others, but him-
 self also, and brings a great Reproach upon the
 blessed TRUTH he professeth, which is worse than
 all; and this hath already been manifested in a
 great Measure, and by sad Experience witnessed.
 But the honest upright Heart and Mind knows
 how to want, as well as how to abound, having
 learned Content in all States and Conditions; a
 small Cottage and a little Trade is sufficient to
 that Mind, and it never wants what is sufficient:
For he that cloaths the Lillies, and feeds the Ravens,
cares for all who trust in him, as it is at this Day
witnessed, Praises to God on high; and that Man
hath no Glory in (nor Mind out after) superfluous
or needless rich Hangings, costly Furniture, fine Ta-
bles, great Treats, curious Beds, Vessels of Silver, or
Vessels of Gold, the very Possession of which creates
Envy, as saith the ancient Christian, Clement A-
lexandrinus, Pædag. lib. 2. Cap. 3. Pag. 160, 161.
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The Way to be rich and happy in this World, is first to learn Righteousness; for such were never forsaken in any Age, nor their Seed begging Bread. And charge all Parents of Children, that they keep their Children low and plain in Meat, Drink, Apparel, and every Thing else, and in due Subjection to all and reasonable Commands, and let them not appear above the real Estates of their Parents, nor get up in Pride and high Things, though their Parents have plentiful Estates, for that is of dangerous Consequence to their future Happiness: And let all who profess the TRUTH, both Young and Old, Rich and Poor, see that they walk according to the Rule and Discipline of the Gospel, in all Godly Conversation and Honesty, that none may suffer Wrong by them in any Matter or Thing whatever; that, as the Apostle exhorted, *they may owe nothing to any Man, but love one another; for Love out of a pure Heart is the fulfilling of the Law*, which Law commands *to do justly to all Men*. And he that hath but little, let him live according to that little, and appear to be what in Truth he is; for above all God abhors the Hypocrite; and he that makes Haste to be rich falls into * *Snares, Temptations, and many noisom and hurtful Lusts*, which drown many in Perdition; *And the Love of Money is the Root of all Evil, which, while some have lusted after, they have erred from the Faith, and pierced themselves thro' with many Sorrows.*

For preventing this growing Evil for the Time to come, let such by faithful Friends be exhorted, who either live without due Care, spending above what they are able to pay for, or

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* 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

run into great Trades, beyond what they can in Honesty and Truth manage; and let them be tenderly admonished of such their Undertakings: This will not offend the lowly upright Mind; neither will the Honest-minded, who through a Temptation may be drawn into such a Snare and Danger, take any Occasion to stumble, because his Deeds are brought to Light. And if after mature Deliberation, any are manifested to be run into any Danger of falling, or pulling others down with them, let them be faithfully dealt withal in Time, before Hope of Recovery be lost, by honest faithful Friends, who are clear of such Things themselves, and be admonished to pay what they have borrowed faithfully, and in due Time, and be content with their own, and to labour with their own Hands in the Thing that is honest, that they may have wherewith to give to him that needeth, knowing that *|| it is more blessed to give than to receive.* And if they hear, and are thereby recovered, you will not count your Labour lost; but if they be high, and refuse Admonition, it is a manifest Sign all is not well: Let such be admonished again by more Friends and warned of the Danger before them; and if they still refuse and reject Counsel and Admonition, then lay it before the Meeting (concerned about TRUTH's Affairs) to which they do belong, and if they refuse to hear them, then let a Testimony go forth against such their Proceedings and Undertakings, *as not being agreeable to the TRUTH, nor the Testimony of a good Conscience, neither in the Sight of GOD nor Man:* This will be a Terror to evil Doers of this Kind, and a Praise, Encouragement and Refreshment to them who do well, and nothing will be lost that

is worth saving by this Care; for he that doth Truth, whether in spiritual or temporal Matters, will willingly bring his Deeds to Light, that they may be manifested to all, that they are wrought in God.

These Things lay weightily upon me, and I may truly say, in the Sight of God, *I writ them in a great Cross to my own Will*; for I delight not, nay, my Soul is bowed down at the Occasion of writing such Things; but there is no Remedy, the Name of the LORD has been, and is likely to be greatly dishonoured, if Things of this Nature be not stopped, or prevented for Time to come: Therefore I beseech you all, who have the Weight and Sense of these Things upon you, let some speedy and effectual Course be taken to prevent what possibly we may, both in this and all other Things, that may any Way cloud the Glory of that Sun which is risen amongst us. And make this publick, and send it abroad to be read in true Fear and Reverence, and let all concerned be faithfully and plainly warned, (without Respect of Persons) by faithful Friends, who have the Care of God's Glory, and his Churches Peace and Prosperity upon them: So will the Majesty and Glory of God shine upon your Heads, and you shall be a good Savour of Life, both in them that are saved, and in them that are lost.

*Written by one who longs to see Righteousness
exalted, and all Deceit confounded,*

Catton-place in Surry, the
16th of the Eleventh
Month, 1678.

AMBROSE RIGGE.

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